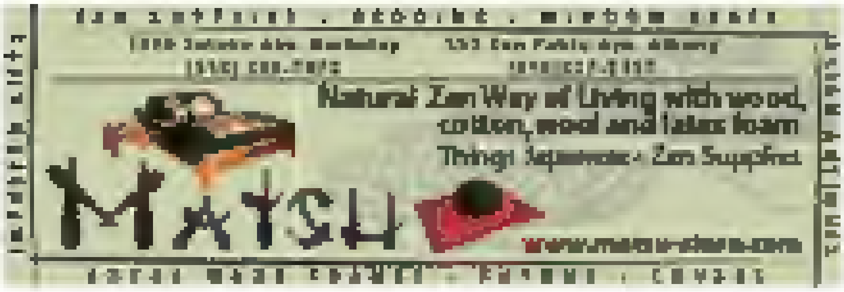

EAST BAY EXPRESS
MARCH 25-31, 2013
SPECIAL ISSUE INSIDE
Taste







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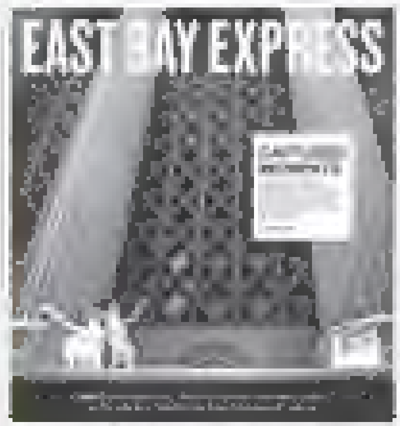
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LETTERS

We Need More Rent Control

We Need Less Rent Control

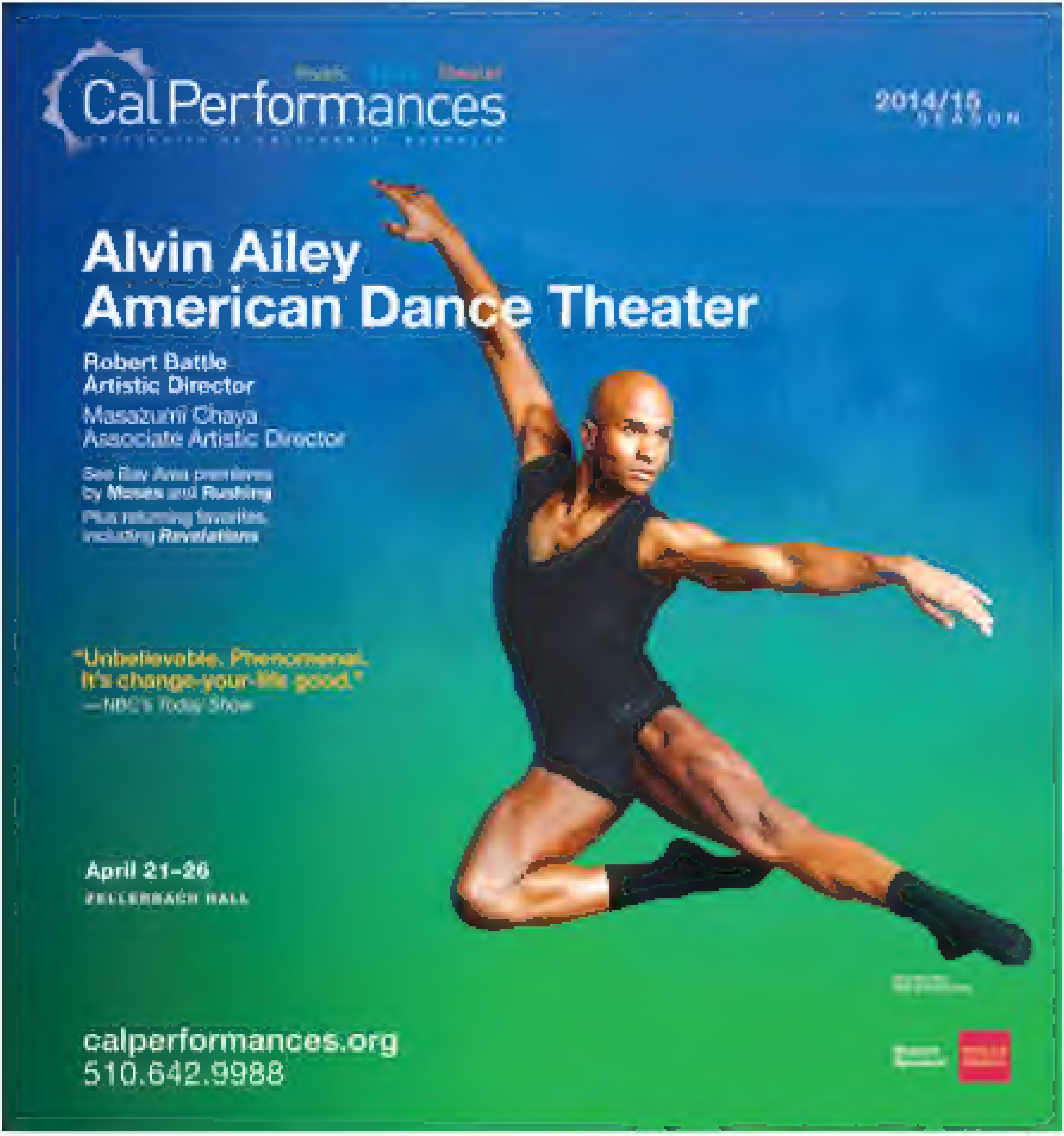
You Need More Examples

Nobody Wanted Clear-Cutting

It Was Not an Environmental Victory

Eucalyptus Get a Bad Rap

Now It's Time to Save the Other Animals



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The Current System Works

Every responsible adult in California over the age of eighteen already has access to medical cannabis for nearly any condition he or she deems it to be helpful for, including stress, anxiety and sleeping disorders. Google "medical cannabis doctor" and you will see the many inexpensive local medical cannabis doctor options you have to choose from.

California also already taxes your medication the same as any other retail item you purchase. No one seems to talk about the millions upon millions of tax dollars that California has already been collecting for years. Stay active in local politics and don't let greedy corporations take away your rights.

Kevin Reed, San Francisco

Medicinal Oil for the Prince of Peace

Big business interests should not be allowed to outlaw home cultivation. You cannot patent a plant, only the strains you have created. If home cultivation is forbidden, the number of strains available to patients and public alike will be limited to those that enrich a few wealthy, greedy, morally unscrupulous people who favor "limited prohibition" in order to line their own pockets.

Prohibition of marijuana is a premise built on a theme of fear "Concern For Public Safety." Our new laws save hundreds of lives every year, on our highways alone. In November of 2013 a study at the University of Colorado found that, in the thirteen states that decriminalized marijuana between 1990 and 2009, traffic fatalities have dropped by nearly 11 percent — now nearly 20 percent in Michigan — while sales of beer went flat. No wonder Big Alcohol opposes it.

In 2012, a study released by AutoInsuranceQuotes revealed that marijuana users are safer drivers than non-marijuana users, as "the only significant effect that marijuana has on operating a motor vehicle is slower driving," which "is arguably a positive thing." Despite sensational accidents, eagerly reported by yellow-blurter "journalists" as "marijuana-related," a mix of substances were often involved in such cases. Alcohol, most likely, and prescription drugs, nicotine, caffeine, meth, cocaine, heroin — plus a trace of the marijuana from a party last week. However, on the whole, as revealed in big-time insurance-industry stats, within the broad swath of mature, experienced consumers, slower and more cautious driving shows up in significant numbers. A recent federal study has reached the same conclusion. And legalization should improve these numbers further.

No one has ever died from an overdose of marijuana. It's the most benign "substance" in history. And many people — and particularly patients who medicate with marijuana — use it in place of prescription drugs or alcohol.

Marijuana has many benefits, most of which are under-reported or never mentioned in American newspapers. Research at the University of Saskatchewan indicates that, unlike alcohol, cocaine, heroin, and Nancy ("Just say 'No!'") Reagan's beloved placebo, marijuana is a neuro-protectant that actually encourages brain-cell growth. Research in Spain (the Guzman study) and other countries has discovered that it also has tumor-shrinking, anti-carcinogenic properties. These were confirmed by the thirty-year Tashkin population study at UCLA.

Drugs are man-made and cooked up in labs for the sake of patents and the profits gained by them — often useful, but typically burdened with cautionary notes and lists of side effects as long as one's arm.

Marijuana is a medicinal herb, the most versatile in history. "Cannabis" in Latin and "kaneh bosm" in the old Hebrew scrolls, quite literally the Biblical Tree of Life, marijuana was used by early Christians to treat everything from skin diseases to [illegible]. The very name "Christ" translates as "the anointed one." Well then, anointed with what? It's a fair question. And it wasn't holy water, friends. Holy water came into wide use in the Middle Ages. In Biblical times it was used by a few tribes of Greek pagans. But Christ was neither Greek nor pagan.

Medicinal oil, for the Prince of Peace. A formula from the Biblical era has been rediscovered. It specifies a strong dose of oil from kaneh bosm, 'the fragrant cane' of a dozen uses: ink, paper, rope, medicine. It was used for daubing on their bodies and incense in their temples. And a "daub" of cannabis oil could certainly calm one's nerves, imparting a sense of benevolence and connection with all living things. No wonder that the "anointed one" could gain a spark, an insight, a sense of the divine, and the confidence to convey those feelings to friends and neighbors.

I am appalled at the number of "Christian" politicians, prosecutors, and police who pose on church steps or kneeling in prayer on their campaign trails but cannot or will not face the actual life or the historical truths about cannabis. Medicinal Herb Number One, safe and effective for thousands of years, and celebrated by most of the world's major religions.

William Clark, Rochester, [illegible]

Is the Bus Stop Really at Fault?

I was talking to one of the [illegible] merchants across from Safeway this morning, and he confirms my suspicion that since the Safeway parking lot opened, his business is getting back to where it was before all the construction made it so difficult to shop there. Since [illegible] customers can conveniently use that parking lot and walk half a block, I'm not seeing the loss of those street spots in the [illegible]. Also, [illegible] than [illegible] or maybe [illegible] per day. That's certainly something you'd like to [illegible] but what percentage of their business is [illegible]


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It sounds well within the range of normal business fluctuations, and sure, you want to reverse that trend, but it's not as simple as blaming the bus stop and you're done.

[illegible], Oakland

Great Parenting Column

I just read the column by [illegible], which my daughter forwarded to me, and I really loved it. She writes and illustrates the situation very well. Being a grandmother, I have memories of the same examples of parenting and experiences.

[illegible], Los Angeles

You Can Do Good and Do Well

I found the recent article about the quandary that unions have between their political views on climate change and their investments in fossil fuels to be very timely. Fossil-free investing is becoming more and more of a force for all investors. In our experience as financial managers, this problem is not unique to unions but is common to many other institutional investors, including public pension organizations, civic groups, and even religious communities. Frequently, there are two different versions of [illegible] and a "[illegible] wall" separating the two.

While this may be a good thing within the Big Banks and Wall Street, it can have a negative impact on organizations. The decision-making policy decisions frequently fail to communicate with the [illegible] investment decisions. The latter tend to operate on a traditional "prudent person" basis, rather than the updated interpretation, which allows for the organizations' mission to play a role in financial decisions. Even among individual investors, there is a perception that investing in a fossil-free portfolio will have a negative impact on performance. This is not the case.

A competitive diversified portfolio can be created without investing in an Exxon, Shell, or, more locally, a Chevron. Investors can integrate their values with their money. It is no longer the case that you can't do good and do well.

[illegible], [illegible]

You Missed One

I'm pretty sad that the Bay Area Derby Girls were missed in this round-up.

[illegible], Oakland

Add One More to the List

I would also add Vintage Pacific ([illegible] Broadway) in the Jack London district. Even though they have only been open for just over a year, they hit the bases. They have great [illegible] and a relaxing vibe. I never feel rushed to leave, and they make the extra effort to know who you are and help you feel part of the experience. Definitely a local gem in my book.

[illegible], Oakland

Oakland Needs to Learn from Richmond

The story stated: "The RPA (Richmond Progressive Alliance) deserves credit for establishing a political climate where the norm is progressive policies and the city, as a whole, has benefited from their work." The East Bay's most corrupt and incompetent city government, namely Oakland, could learn something from the recent political history in Richmond. Oakland really needs both the aspirations of a progressive political party as well as effective good-government leaders. One of the best articles I've seen in the *Express*.

[illegible], Oakland

Birds of a Feather

How interesting that around the same time [illegible] was apparently using her office for personal gain, she was voting to give [illegible] acres of [illegible] Park to [illegible] developers, which was required by US Fish and Wildlife as mitigation for the port's environmentally damaging expansion project. This expansion passed in spite of its lack of financial accountability or transparency. Neighbors will certainly have their privacy taken away by the added lights, noise, and [illegible]. The public will lose open space and the rare plants and animals that live there will be seriously impacted by a project that is supposed to honor native California animals that have been extirpated by development.

[illegible], Oakland

Protests Are Supposed to Be Inconvenient

I refuse to take any position on protests but have to admit being amazed by the people outraged about the inconvenience protests cause. Imagine for a minute how inconvenient it could be to be murdered when you weren't expecting that to happen. And never in my [illegible] years of life in the Bay Area do I recall so many people of so many different ethnic backgrounds being so unified. It's impressive, even given the sad circumstances.

[illegible], Alameda

Correction

Our March [illegible] Seven Days column, "A Drop in the Bucket," misstated the percentage of California's almond crop that is exported. According to the Almond Board of California, it is [illegible] percent — not [illegible] percent.

It's Time To Overturn the State Ban on Rent Control

The Costa-Hawkins Act is not only contributing to soaring rent prices, but it's also creating barriers to new housing construction.

By Robert Gammon

The rent is too damn high in Oakland. Last month, real estate website Trulia reported that rents in Oakland soared [illegible] percent last year — the second-largest price jump in the nation. The real estate company Zillow pegged Oakland's median rent in February at a whopping [illegible] a month — which is nearly triple the national average. And as we noted in a news story earlier this month, some landlords are now raising rents by as much as 50 percent (see "How Rent Bar Tenants Got Displaced," 3/11).

Rents, in short, are officially out of control. And the skyrocketing prices are making apartments much too expensive for many longtime residents. Unfortunately, however, the city can't do much about it. Why? A twenty-year-old state law known as the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act blocks Oakland and other California cities from adopting sensible rent control rules that could help keep rent prices from getting even higher.

Costa-Hawkins, which doesn't get nearly enough attention from the news media, prohibits Oakland from establishing rent control on buildings constructed after 1983. That means that about one-third of all rental units in Oakland — [illegible] — are exempt from the city's rent control regulations. Landlords of these buildings are thus free to raise rents as much as they want — which is exactly what they're doing. And that's a big problem for a city like Oakland, in which approximately 60 percent of residents are renters.

Legislators representing Oakland, Berkeley, San Francisco, San Jose, Los Angeles, and other cities with skyrocketing rents should be clamoring to overturn Costa-Hawkins. But the law — like Prop 13 — has become an electric third rail in California politics: Nobody wants to touch it, not even liberals. But that shouldn't be the case, because Costa-Hawkins is helping make California unaffordable for millions of people, and there's evidence that it's hurting the economy.

Supporters of Costa-Hawkins argue that rent control laws dissuade developers from building new housing. But since 1995, when Costa-Hawkins was passed, housing construction in California has trailed the rest of the nation — by a significant margin. According to a report last week by the nonpartisan state Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), the number of new home permits in California's coastal cities, including Oakland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, was about one-third lower than the rest of the nation during the past decades.

In cities like Oakland, there's strong evidence that Costa-Hawkins has had the opposite effect from what its supporters originally intended. Rather than making it easier to build new market-rate housing, it has helped create barriers to it. Indeed, many housing activists now work to block the construction of market-rate units, because they contend that new apartments prompt rents in the surrounding areas to rise, especially when the housing is built in traditionally affordable neighborhoods. And in many circumstances, they're right: Landlords do sometimes raise prices when new apartments, which often rent at higher prices, come on the market.

This cascading effect has numerous impacts. It not only can price low-income residents out of the city and worsen gentrification, but it also can create serious financial hardships for people who have nowhere else to go. According to the LAO, the poorest 25 percent of households in the state spend about 67 percent of their income, on average, on housing. That means large numbers of residents have little to no money to buy food and other essential items.

Overturning — or at least reforming — Costa-Hawkins could change that. It would allow cities like Oakland to keep rent prices affordable in existing buildings when new apartments are built, and thus lift an unnecessary barrier to housing construction.

So what about the argument by opponents of rent control that housing prices are soaring because there's not enough housing (the LAO makes that argument, too)? Well, they're right. The lack of supply has sent housing prices through the roof, and we do need more housing — at all price levels. But it could take decades for California to build enough housing to keep prices under control. According to the LAO, the state should have constructed millions of new units during the past few decades.

As such, one sensible reform to Costa-Hawkins would be to exempt new housing units from rent control laws for ten years. That way, developers would be sure to get healthy returns on their investments, and so would not be dissuaded from building new housing — while renters in existing buildings that are ten years or older would be guaranteed to not face ridiculous rent hikes.

Out-of-control rents are also an immediate problem that can be addressed quickly. And politics shouldn't get in the way. After all, California has become much more liberal in the last two decades. Costa-Hawkins was enacted under the Republican administration of then-Governor Pete Wilson.

Those days are obviously over, and it's time for the state to let cities like Oakland enact laws that will prevent more residents from getting displaced.

Robert.Gammon@EastBayExpress.com

LEGALIZATION NATION

More Downs Than Ups

The Bay Area medical cannabis industry seems to be taking two steps back for every step forward lately. Notes from four of the front lines.

By David Downs

[illegible]

Richmond

[illegible]

Vallejo

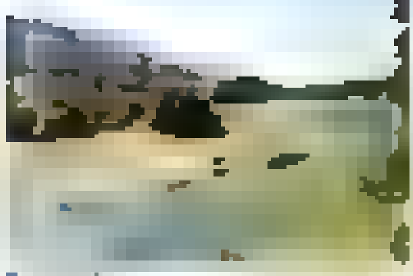
[illegible]

Santa Cruz

[illegible]


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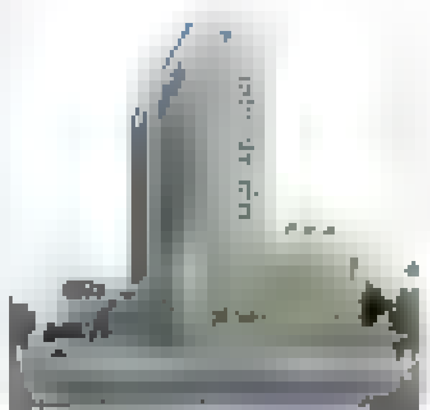

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A Parcel for the People?

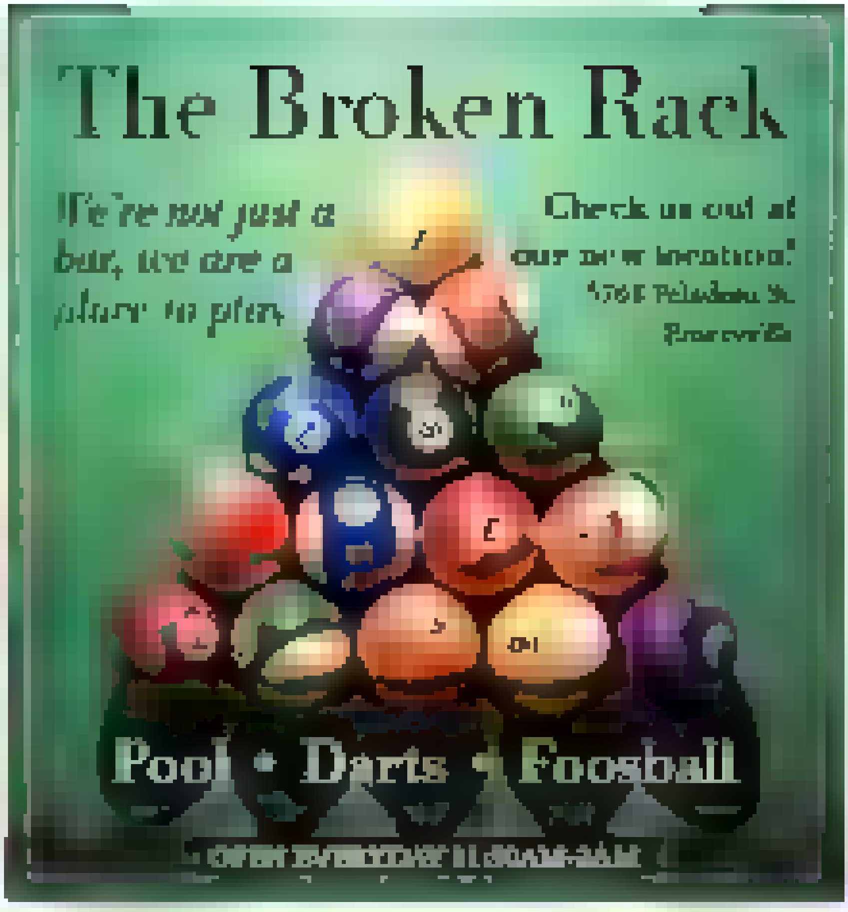
A growing number of Eastlake neighbors are opposing plans to sell a city-owned parcel to a developer that wants to build a [illegible]-story luxury apartment tower. The developer also has a history of not paying its debts.

By Darwin BondGraham






SALE!
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An Eviction Nightmare







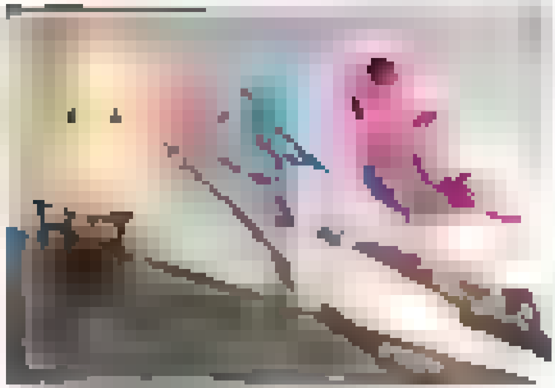
Taking Comedy Seriously

Female comedians blend progressive politics and social justice into their routines — and push the boundaries of mainstream stand-up.



Queer Ecology

By Sarah Burke






What Goes Around
Comes Around - and Around - and
URBAN ORE®


Just Pet Me


Fertile
Ground

Think indie













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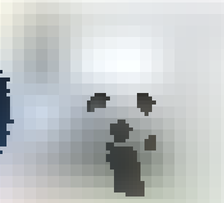
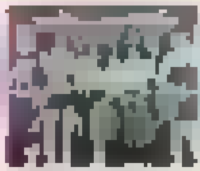
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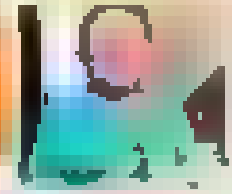
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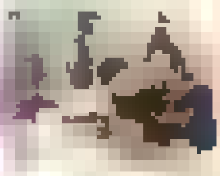
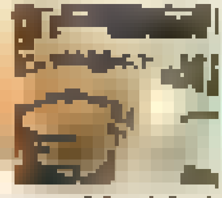
This Is Real Life



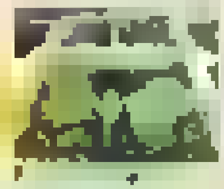
More Listings Online

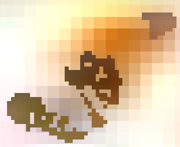




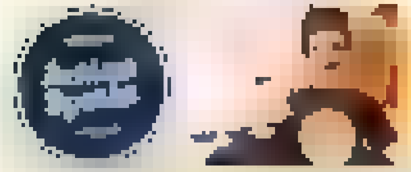



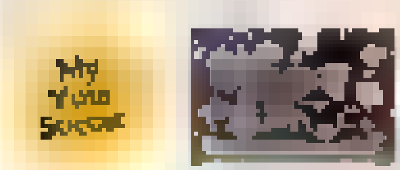


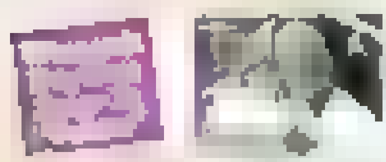
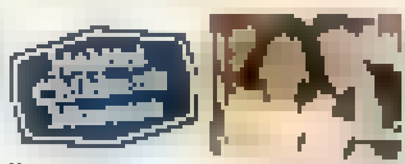
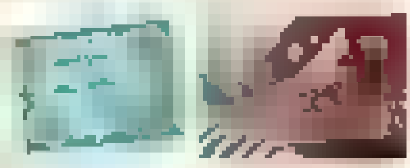
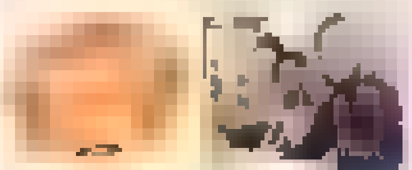


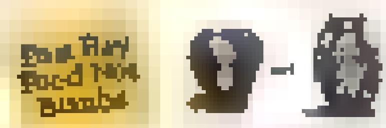


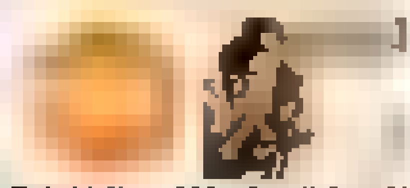








More Listings Online

If These Walls Could Mime

In *Destination Home*, Ragged Wing Ensemble explores the slippery concept of home in surprising, dreamlike ways.

By Anna Pulley





oakland
symphony
NOTES FROM MEXICO
CARLOS CHÁVEZ
MEDLEY OF TRADITIONAL MEXICAN SONGS

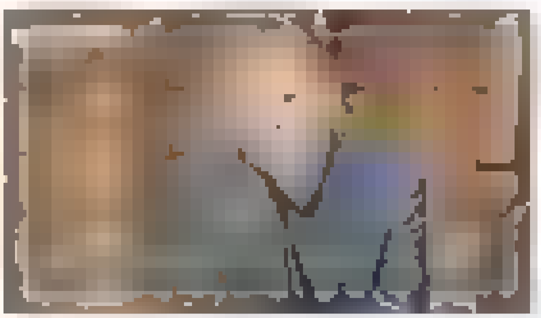


The TM technique has been learned by over 6 million people, and over 350 published studies have found it effective as a natural treatment for stress and anxiety, insomnia, hypertension, and more



Benicia
Maker Faire
One Man Show
@ Media Center
Downtown Berkeley

Kazuo Ishiguro

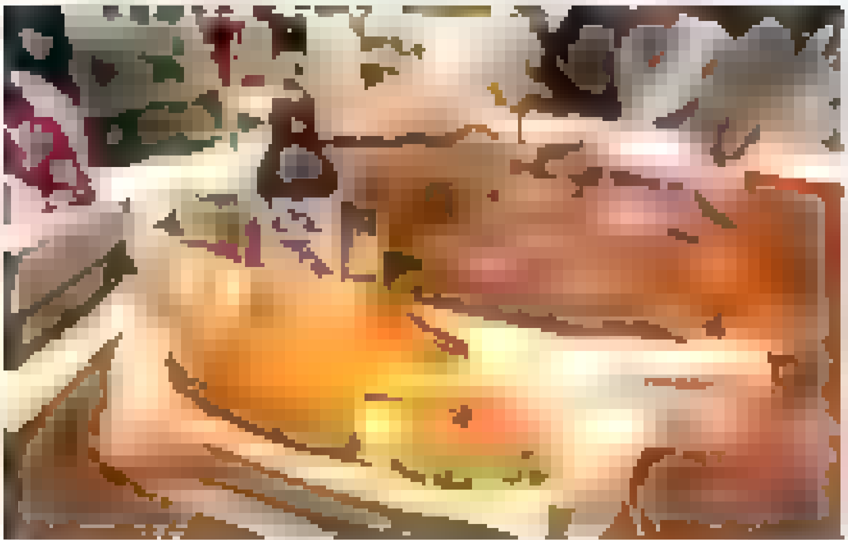


KIDS

Ask Mr. Dad

Whose homework are you doing?
By Armin Brott





Going Analog

Vinyl, VHS, and kick-ass vegan [illegible]

By Luke Tsai

[illegible]

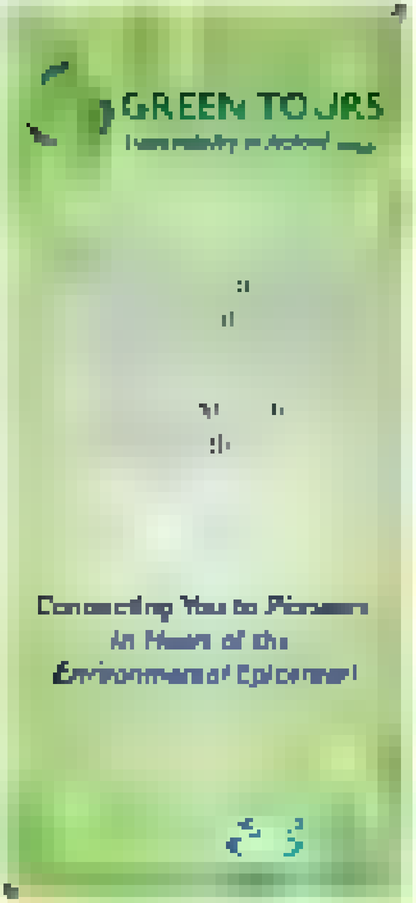
Analog

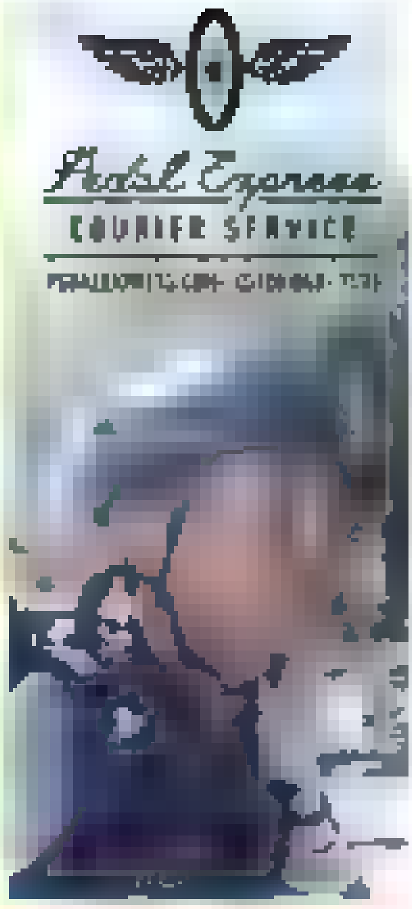
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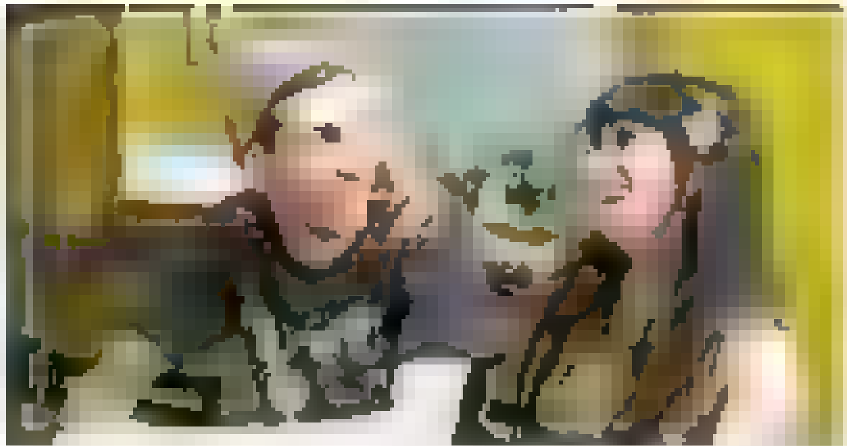
Sample Menu

[illegible]




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ANNEX BURGER



A Neighborhood Coffee Truck

Plus, four asparagus dishes to help ring in the spring.

Spring Bounty

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Au Coquelet

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Summer Kitchen and Bake Shop

Trueburger

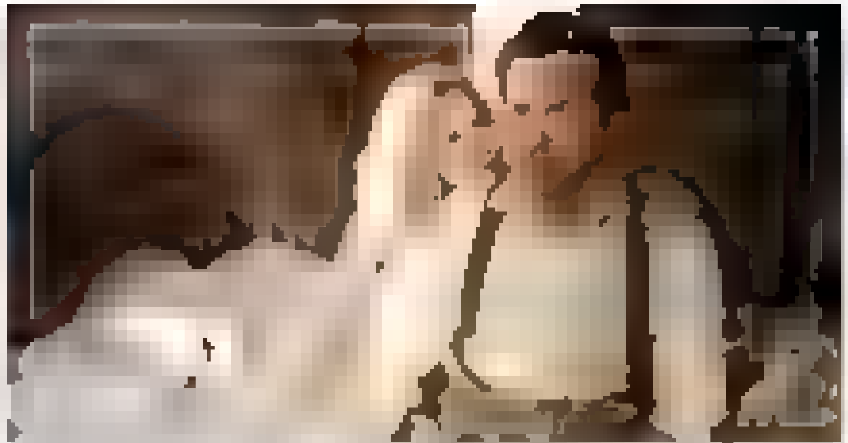
Venus

Victory Burger

POP Sandwich Pop-Up at Smart Bomb



The Beat Goes On

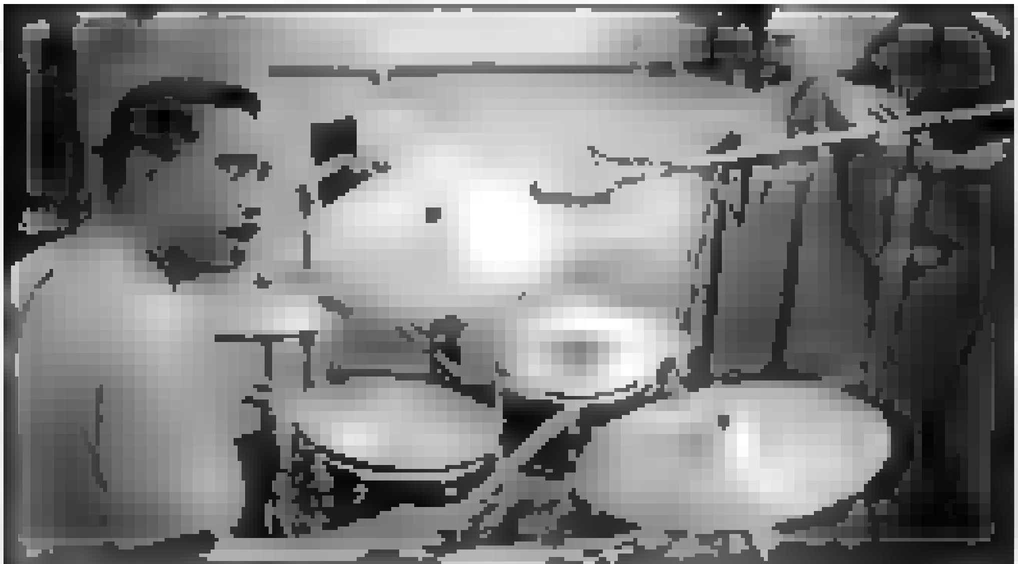


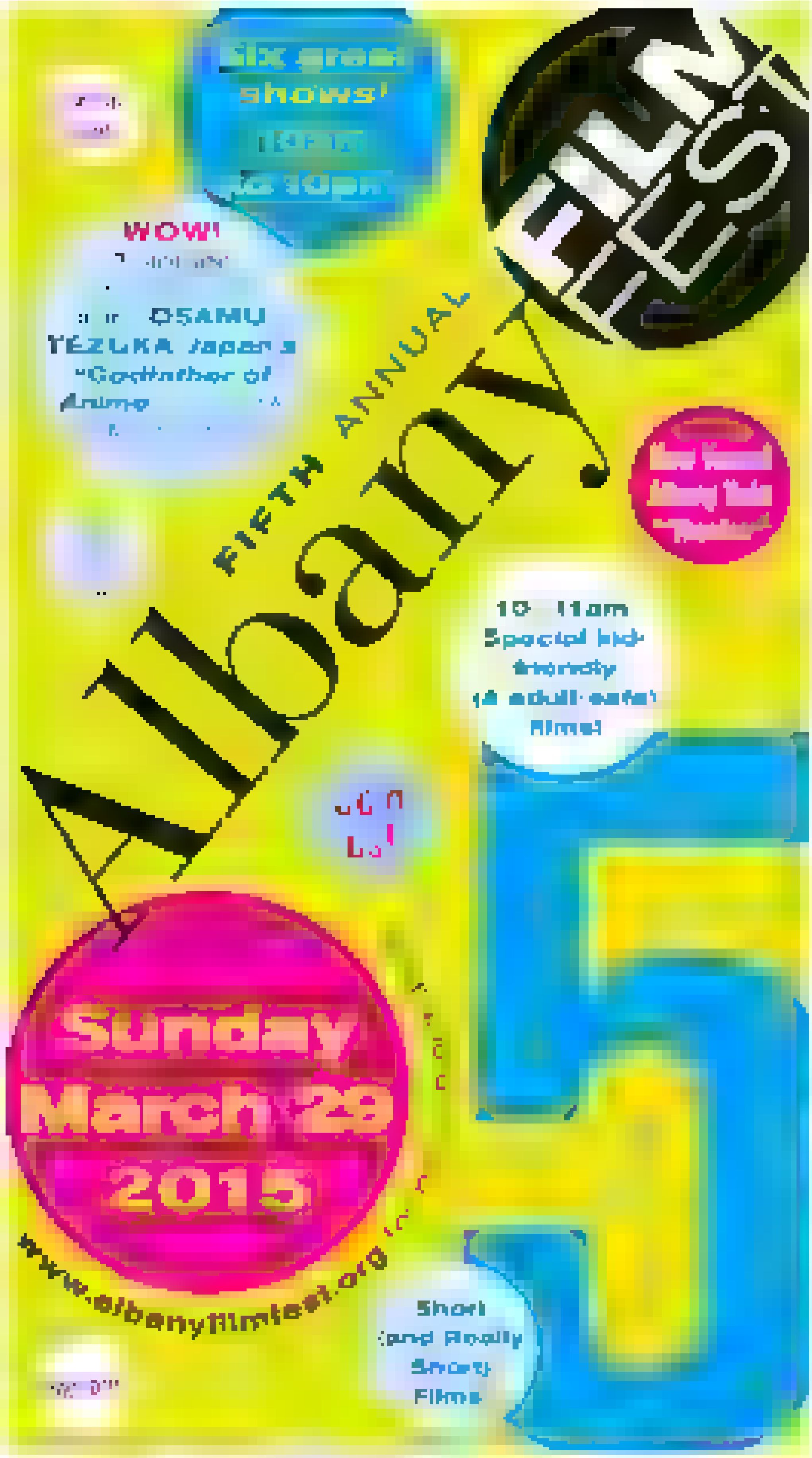
The Wrecking Crew

OPENINGS

ONGOING

Showtimes Online




six great
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TEZUKA Japan's
"Godfather of
Anime
FIFTH ANNUAL
Albany
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Special kid-
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(& adult-safe)
films!
Sunday
March 29
2015
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Short
(and Really
Short)
Films


THE SECOND
MARIGOLD
HOTEL
NOW PLAYING IN THEATRES EVERYWHERE

ONE-NIGHT STANDS

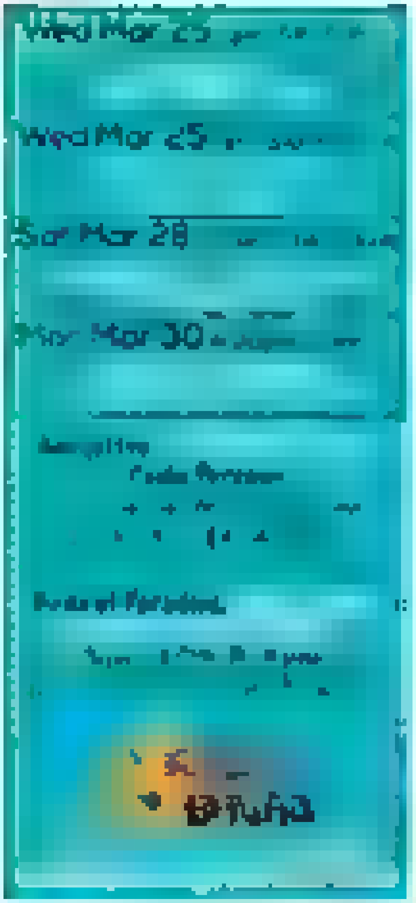






Conjugating Sound











Golden Shovels





THE SPEAKER BOX CAFE
$1 COFFEE
7AM TO 7PM
LEF'S
WED 3/25
JAZZ MAFIA
THURS 3/26
SAT 3/28
FRI 3/27
TOBACCO
SAT 4/4
THURS 4/2
SIERRA VALLEY
NEW PARISH
FRIDAY 3/27
PIMPS OF JOYTIME
5791 6TH
BRICK & MORTAR
WED 3/25
THE ROCK STEADY
BROUGHT TO YOU BY PARISH ENTERTAINMENT GROUP







THURSDAY 26

All Ages

Gospel & Vocal

Jazz, Lounge, & Cabaret

Rock & Pop

Soul, Funk, R&B, & Hip-Hop

World, Latin, Reggae, & Reggaeton

Jazz, Lounge, & Cabaret

Rock & Pop

FRIDAY 27

Blues, Folk, & Country

Classical & Opera

Experimental & Avant-Garde

Jazz, Lounge, & Cabaret

Rock & Pop

Soul, Funk, R&B, & Hip-Hop

World, Latin, Reggae, & Reggaeton

Jazz, Lounge, & Cabaret

Rock & Pop

SATURDAY 28

All Ages

Blues, Folk, & Country


POPTHEDREAM
SATURDAY
APRIL 4
STEVE AOKI
CHUCKIE
FEED ME
GARETH
NERVO


FOX
OAKLAND
INGRID
MICHAELSON
NOSTALGHIA
MARCH 31
stromae
FRIDAY, APRIL







Sir Lord Von Raven

Classical & Opera

Jazz, Lounge, & Cabaret

Rock & Pop

Soul, Funk, R&B, & Hip-Hop

World, Latin, Reggae, & Reggaeton

Classical & Opera

Experimental & Avant-Garde

Jazz, Lounge, & Cabaret

Rock & Pop

Soul, Funk, R&B, & Hip-Hop

SUNDAY 29



All Ages

Blues, Folk, & Country

Classical & Opera

Jazz, Lounge, & Cabaret

Rock & Pop

Soul, Funk, R&B, & Hip-Hop

World, Latin, Reggae, & Reggaeton

Classical & Opera

Gospel & Vocal

Jazz, Lounge, & Cabaret

Rock & Pop

VENUE DIRECTORY EAST BAY











Soul, Funk, R&B, & Hip-Hop

MONDAY 30

Blues, Folk, & Country

Rock & Pop

Blues, Folk, & Country

Rock & Pop

TUESDAY 31

All Ages

Classical & Opera

Jazz, Lounge, & Cabaret

Rock & Pop

Soul, Funk, R&B, & Hip-Hop

Experimental & Avant-Garde

Jazz, Lounge, & Cabaret

Rock & Pop

WEDNESDAY 1

All Ages

Blues, Folk, & Country

Classical & Opera

Jazz, Lounge, & Cabaret

Rock & Pop

Soul, Funk, R&B, & Hip-Hop

World, Latin, Reggae, & Reggaeton

Blues, Folk, & Country

Experimental & Avant-Garde

Jazz, Lounge, & Cabaret

Rock & Pop

THURSDAY 26

FRIDAY 27

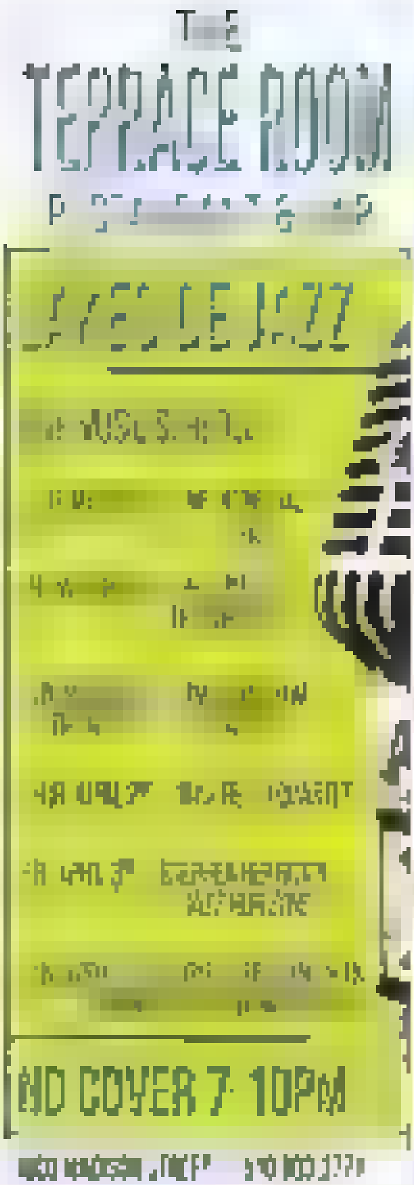
SATURDAY 28

SUNDAY 29

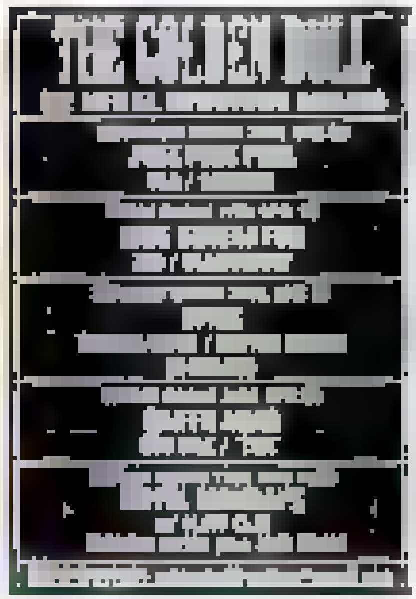
MONDAY 30

TUESDAY 31

WEDNESDAY 1









We Are All Annoying on the Internet

Is policing someone's online behavior effective or worthwhile?

By Anna Pulley



Free Will Astrology

Horoscopes for the week of March 26–April 1

By Rob Brezsny











Massive Cock Blocks

On "straight" men, a Dom/sub roadblock, and getting comfortable with human bodies

By Dan Savage

I found this in an online sex ad: "Straight guy with an addiction to massive cocks in my ass." This "straight guy" went on to mention his girlfriend. Can a person really identify as straight while wanting to be fucked by men? I understand that straight guys can like ass play too, but it's not like he wants to be pegged by his girlfriend or use a dildo on himself. He's straight-up (heh heh) looking for long dicks to fuck his ass.

Asked And Wondering, Doesn't Really Do Pegs?

Can a person identify as straight while wanting to be fucked by men? Ha-ha-ha. Yes. I was pretending to be straight when I was fifteen, Pastor Ted "Meth and Man Ass" Haggard was pretending to be straight when he was 49, and Congressman Aaron Schock is still pretending to be straight.

As for the guy behind that online sex ad: He is most likely bisexual and rounding himself down to straight. There's a small possibility he's straight and it isn't the massive cocks that turn him on, AAWDRDP, but the boundary-shattering/identity-upending violation that being penetrated by massive cocks represents. It could also be a "forced bi" thing, and he's doing this to please a dominant girlfriend. Or — and this is a lot likelier than straight or forced bi — he's a gay guy who pretends to be a straight guy online because the ruse attracts gay and bi guys turned on by the boundary-crossing/identity-upending violation that shoving their massive cocks up a straight guy's ass represents.

Only way to know for sure: Ask him yourself. No guarantee you'll get a straight answer, of course, but only he knows for sure what's up with him.

I recently started dating a girl who likes to be submissive. It's more of a psychological thing than a pain thing. She opened up about her kink, and I was all for it, thinking myself the ultimate GGG lover. Thing is, I find being a Dom quite boring. I love getting her off, but I just can't get into the role. I'm not sure if this is funny or horrible, but the other day, she was strapped to the bed and just as she was reaching a climax, I stopped. I uncuffed her, told her I was leaving the room, and ordered her not to take the blindfold off or touch herself. She loved it, but I did it so I could go to the toilet and check my phone. I'd say something to her if I found it gross or it wasn't working, but she enjoys it to the point where she has little interest in doing anything else. Even when regular intercourse takes place, there are still clear submissive overtones — to have vanilla sex at all, I basically have to lecture her first about her dirty ways to get her going. I like more "normal" activities like dying, massages, etc. She seems open to it but then steers it back to her submissiveness. I enjoy sex with her, but this Dom/sub thing is a roadblock to me getting off. Am I just being self-centered?

Dom Only On Demand

All BDSM tops — all Masters, Mistresses, Pro-Doms, sadists, rank-hot-GGG partners of submissive types — occasionally check their phones, go to the toilet, take a snack break, etc., while their subs wait blindfolded or bound back in the bedroom/playroom/dungeon. The sub gets to tremble in anticipation; the Dom gets to relax for a second. So taking a quick toilet/phone break doesn't mean you are a lousy Dom, DOOD, but I definitely see why you're bored: BDSM isn't your thing, you're doing it for her, and she's taking you for granted. You're being GGG (and indulging all her kinks); she's not being GGG (she's making it all about her kinks). Tell your girlfriend that she'll have to lecture herself about her dirty ways when you two are having vanilla PIV sex, dying, or swapping massages, if that's what it takes to get her going, because you don't want to have to play at being dominant every time you have sex.

I suspect the Dom/sub play will feel like less of a roadblock, DOOD, if every sexual interaction with your girlfriend isn't ordered by it.

I love my girlfriend. However, she has an issue with things she considers "icky" — like sperm, saliva, sex when menstruating, and anal sex as well as the resulting messes. She also regards dressing up for sex and talking dirty as silly. She enjoys sex just fine, but it is pretty plain vanilla. Any advice on how to coax her in a more experimentalist direction would be appreciated. I am not looking to turn her into an anal fanatic or a sloppy blowjob queen, but rather for her to put aside her preconceived notions and give some things a try by embracing them fully.

Wants A Less Tedious

Anal isn't for everyone and sloppy blowjobs aren't for everyone, WALT, but a fear of all bodily secretions — with the convenient exception of her own vaginal secretions — isn't just one-cognitive, it's childish. Let her know that, as much as you love her, this relationship won't last if she can't get a little more comfortable with human bodies and the stuff that leaks from those bodies, during, and after sex. ●

Find the Savage Lovecast (my weekly podcast) every Tuesday at Savagelovecast.com.
mail@savagelove.net

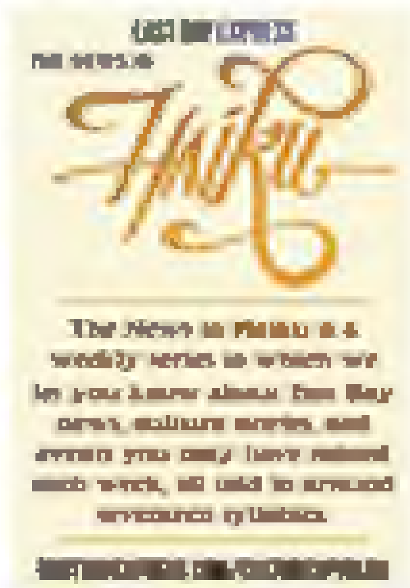
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